

THE CORPORATION OF THE
CITY OF WHITE ROCK
CORPORATE REPORT



DATE: February 8, 2021

TO: Mayor and Council

FROM: Jacquie Johnstone, Director, Human Resources

SUBJECT: COVID-19 Regional Staffing Responses

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council receives for information the corporate report dated February 8, 2021 from the Director of Human Resources, titled “COVID-19 Regional Staffing.”

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

At the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020, the Province of BC invoked a Provincial State of Emergency and introduced cross-government measures necessary to reduce the transmission of the virus and keep communities and workplaces safe. Essential services were designated, and businesses or services deemed non-essential were ordered to close, including civic facilities and services impacting staffing levels. Local governments throughout BC have undertaken a variety of safety measures and taken similar approaches throughout the phases of COVID-19 since March 2020, to reduce the spread of the virus and to try and keep both its community and workers safe.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL DIRECTION

Motion # & Meeting Date	Motion Details
2020-599 December 7, 2020	Council directed staff to bring forward a report that compares how White Rock compares to adjoining municipalities, such as Delta, Surrey, Port Moody, Langley City and Langley Township, regarding staffing information / how adjoining municipalities managed their staffing in relation to the pandemic.

INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

On March 17, 2020, the Province declared a public health emergency and implemented Phase 1 protective measures that included introducing public health orders and directives with cross-government measures to mitigate the spread of the COVID-19 virus. In local government across the Region, a significant impact was the closure of recreation and library programs, civic facilities and services.

As a result of these closures, all municipalities throughout the Region responded, which included interim reductions of temporary staff and redeployment of permanent recreation and libraries staff. Many in the Region also entered into formal letters of agreements with their unions to have the flexibility in assignments and hours of work for their permanent staff, to reduce the

impact of temporary permanent layoffs, and to arrange more flexibility in the recall of those permanent staff who were laid off. White Rock staff met with its local CUPE union representatives and reached an agreement allowing for flexibility in the redeployment of staff. Both parties agreed that a formal agreement was unnecessary at the time, since permanent staff layoffs were unexpected.

The table below summarizes the actions taken by surrounding communities in the Region in response to facility closures and impacted staffing levels, along with the population and annual budget for each of the communities listed.

Municipality	COVID-19 Action	Recreation (R) / Library (L) Staff	Approximate # of Layoffs	Workforce Adjustment LOA Date
White Rock Pop 21,400 AB \$43.7M	Interim Reduction of Temporary/Redeployment of Permanent Staff	R	34 Temporary	NA
Langley, City Pop 27,600 AB \$47.4M	Interim Reduction of Temporary/Temporary Layoff and Redeployment of Permanent Staff	R	45 Temporary 1 Permanent	May 2020
Port Moody Pop 35,600 AB \$72.2	Interim Reduction of Temporary/Redeployment of Permanent Staff	R + L	370 Temporary	April 2020
Delta Pop 109,500 AB \$237M	Interim Reduction of Temporary/Redeployment of Permanent Staff	R	500 Temporary	March 2020
Langley, Township Pop 127,300 AB \$258.3	Interim Reduction of Temporary/Temporary Layoff and Redeployment of Permanent Staff	R	340 Temporary 38 Permanent	April 2020
Surrey Pop 569,000 AB \$842.4M	Interim Reduction of Temporary/Temporary Layoff and Redeployment of Permanent Staff	R + L	1900 Temporary 140 Permanent	March 2020

Throughout the Region, current facility capacity targets range from 25% to 60%, with all encouraging remote work for those positions where it is operationally viable. A few have formal employee rotation schedules in and out of the office, with no requirements for employees to spend a minimum number of days in the office. Similar to White Rock, most have deferred this to individual departments to determine the feasibility of remote working arrangements during COVID-19. Excluding the Fire Department, White Rock has approximately 50% of its inside workforce working remotely part-time.

As the Province continues to respond and transition through the phases in response to the COVID-19 pandemic which began in March 2020, the Region is gradually bringing back staff

who were temporarily laid off due to full program closures. With the re-opening of various services and recreation programs with safety plans in place, White Rock has returned all repurposed permanent staff to their base positions and have rehired 21 temporary employees. Some of the temporary staff in Recreation and Culture have been re-hired to perform mandatory WorkSafeBC cleaning protocols while most all other temporary employees have been rehired to support current operational and service requirements.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Any savings that we had due to reduced staffing has been offset with reductions in revenues due to COVID-19 which were part of the total estimated deficit for 2020 of \$1.1 M as reported through the Finance Department which qualifies for funding under the COVID-19 Restart Grant.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Not applicable.

COMMUNICATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

Not applicable.

INTERDEPARTMENTAL INVOLVEMENT/IMPLICATIONS

Not applicable.

CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

Not applicable.

ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Not applicable.

OPTIONS / RISKS / ALTERNATIVES

Not applicable.

CONCLUSION

At the meeting on December 7, 2020, Council directed staff to bring forward a report with information that compared White Rock's response related to staffing level adjustments resulting from facility closures and reduction of services due to COVID-19 and Provincial Health Orders, with other municipalities, such as Delta, Surrey, Port Moody, and the City and Township of Langley. This report provides a brief summary comparing the City's response to staffing levels with other communities in the Region, for Council's information.

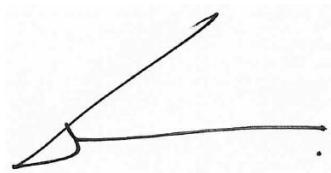
Respectfully submitted,



Jacquie Johnstone
Director, Human Resources

Comments from the Chief Administrative Officer

This corporate report is provided for information purposes.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Guillermo Ferrero". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a distinct upward flourish at the end.

Guillermo Ferrero
Chief Administrative Officer